

tried upon her so treacherously that she was frightened and ran into the hut.

"Follow her close, Sonny!" spoke old Beatty, "she's the worst villainess you'll find. We must be in the house till we can kill her."

The father had communicated his spirit of decision to the son, and both followed the girl bravely through the basement and up the shallow cupboard stairs, where Bradlock seized her manfully.

"Mayn't be Archy's life or yours, buzzy!" he exclaimed. "Who's the killing but you? Who stole my secret paper from my cupboard but the gal I raised? Then that kid stole the murder, and of Archy an' me found two thieves in our house a burglar and a thief. It was lawful for us to kill 'em."

The old pirate and his daughter opened his chamber door, tore down the rifle there, and put his hand upon the spike screws, crying:

"It was my private paper, carefully tucked away. My son, I'll show you the empty spot for not even you knowed of it. See it here!"

At the words the wooden studding was twisted off, and the paper appeared.

Bradlock was an instant confounded, and his head fell to the floor. Then he picked up his rifle and whispered:

"MAYN'T SHE BE A WIT?"

Clutching the paper was gone. What signs is there on it? Which side, by God? Sonny, what I want the witch?

As Bradlock threw down the paper with its photographic characters which had so frightened him, Archy, in pity of the girl, was moved to tell a lie.

He took the paper up, and with a guilty, covertly unresented face affirmed:

"Pa! I made them characters myself."

There was his daughter's look, and knew his cause to be the generous falsehood he had told for her.

She took the paper from Archy's hand, and, turning to Bradlock Beatty, pointed with her finger to the photographic signs.

"That was a falsehood Archy told, Bradlock! Listen to the truth, sir! A dead man made them signs, and I think they mean that he's got on the track of the folks you stole their property from. If that's the fact, you kin never wash that writing off."

He stared at her a moment, gave a yell of terror, and, suddenly turning, pushed her into the closet and halted the door upon her.

The old man's wild ability had been thinking while he quailed and feared:

"Archy," he whispered, "I've lit upon a plan, my boy. My criterion is all harnessed. You stand by this closet door with my gun and keep her there till I am out of sight and sound, while I'll set the body on my wiggins and take back toward the Gap, what'll they say wood grade for my old critter up to the top of the mountain. If anybody passes me I'll have the corpse covered with the junk and carpet-rags I've gathered to-day. This 14-man was fond of riding all over the loose places on the mountain, and I'll set him at the foot of the White Rock and put a stone on his head what'll he do? He'll crawl and leave him there. Sometimes nobody goes up there for a month, and the buzzards will take most of my away in a week. Then, as for Perry, I've got a plan to cover her to be still till tomorrow."

"Father, how can I live in such falsehood and save my soul?"

"Perrykin! yit!" hissed the old man. "Take your feet right about the gallows and your last congregation the whole County. It means—"

"YOU COULD LIE JUST NOW FOR THAT FINE."

who looked at us both and loved the Irishman? No way? If you waste another minute I'll empty my rifle through that tin door and take out the corpse of the only witness you'll find. Then you and me are both dead, and the evidence, and both murder in the first degree."

Archy buried his face in his hands.

"Go, father, I'll keep Perry yer till you come back."

"No, Sonny. Wait till I kin reach the Rock, then save yourself and clear out of the way till the murder is smoothed over."

He fell upon his knees and kissed his son's little hands.

"My child! my child! We shall see each other, I reckon, no more forever!"

X.

MOUNTAIN CLOUD.

The days were long at that season, and the afternoon heat kept people from walking about so that Bradlock was not any human being during his round-trip of about six miles from the Gap to the White Rock Summit and back again by the steep western declivity into the great Cumberland Valley and home.

There and there he had to set his shoulder and hands to the old skeleton wagon to assist his stumbling horse, but in general the mountain ridge was level, and had a legible track within the comb of naked and weather-battered rock that made the eastern rampart like a palisade.

Bradlock was a frightened creature, because in all his turbulent life he had never killed a fellow-man, and now was making himself an accessory to murder from his love of his only respectable son.

And now and then as Bradlock had been, and made poor by "lawing," though he kept the plaintiff and often victors, he had become the last inhabitant of an isolated, lonely and insecure habitation which was not his own, he still feared the white law, and had the discomfort to see that he was concealing, and therefore winking, a capital crime.

So his body became like a furnace between his horse and his agony, and yet the perspiration on his face and hands was cold. He had a horse, and often consulted it.

To leave his son on the fatal cord, to die himself, so he had often feared would be his fate by the misdoing of some of his thievish schemes, was now his alternative; and true to his high character, he sought for some one to lay his own trait upon, and there was only one the girl who would upon her own be without any defender.

She had kept up jealousy between his beloved son and himself, as her expanding beauty made Bradlock covet her and Archy spiteful and restrain her.

Now she was left in her ignorance to confront a supreme and a secret crime, without any other adviser than Bradlock Beatty himself, whose consent of understanding and

circumventing the law was equal to Archy's late self-assurance about reading.

The old man feared her wit, but could not

Children Cry for

Pitcher's Castoria.

deprecation, remembering how lovingly he had raised her.

The resolve, which is the noblest motive, while he conducted the dead upon his miserable hearse to a stately and solemn sepulture on the mountain capstones.

These reflections kept Bradlock from the terror of the dead man's presence till he had come to the end of the legible way to the White Rock, and the track that he had followed disappeared down the Western declivity of the mountain.

It was now necessary to turn up the rugged parapet or comb, and pass through its rocky teeth at a shallow depression, so as to gain the concave side of the mountain where it threw off a huge buttress or shoulder above a mile long into the Catoctin Valley, and near the union of this hump to the South Mountain axis was to be found the White Rock, a lookout for hunters and occasional excursionists.

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